

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01

SAJ-01 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-01 CEA-01

AGR-05 SSC-01 /094 W

----- 114026

O R 311649Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6301

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 02724

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH CABINET RESHUFFLE

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SUMMARY. CABINET RESHUFFLE ANNOUNCED JANUARY 31 IS MAINLY A MINOR FACELIFTING TO ELIMINATE LESS EFFICIENT MINISTERS, WHILE EMPHASIZING GOF DETERMINATION TO GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO PROBLEM AREAS OF FOREIGN TRADE, AGRICULTURE, AND CONDITIONS WITHIN FRENCH MILITARY. WITH EXCEPTION OF DEFENSE, ALL MINISTERIAL POSTS REMAIN IN SAME HANDS. WE EXPECT NO ABRUPT CHANGES IN FRENCH DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN POLICY. RESHUFFLE FURTHER ENHANCES PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC'S GROWING AUTHORITY. END SUMMARY.

1. ON JANUARY 31, ELYSEE ANNOUNCED FOLLOWING CABINET CHANGES: YVON BOURGES (GAULLIST DEPUTY) REPLACING JACQUES SOUFFLET WHO RESIGNED AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE; NORBERT SEGARD, WHO HAS BEEN STATE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN TRADE, PROMOTED TO MINISTERIAL RANK; AYMAR ACHILLE-FOULD (CENTRIST) REPLACING PIERRE LELONG AS STATE SECRETARY FOR POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS; JEAN-FRANCOIS DENIAU APPOINTED TO NEW POSITION OF STATE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE; GENERAL MARCEL BIGEARD APPOINTED TO NEW POSITION AS STATE SECRETARY AT DEFENSE MINISTRY.

2. THIS NOT UNEXPECTED MINOR FACELIFTING APPEARS MAINLY RELATED TO GISCARD'S AND CHIRAC'S DESIRE TO ELIMINATE LESS EFFICIENT CABINET MINISTERS. SOUFFLET'S DEPARTURE FROM THE DEFENSE MINISTRY IN PARTICULAR HAS BEEN RUMORED OFF AND ON FOR MONTHS (PARIS 430). AND LELONG'S INABILITY TO IMPROVE HIS PUBLIC IMAGE FOLLOWING LAST FALL'S MAIL STRIKE, COMBINED WITH HIS LACKLUSTER OVERALL PERFORMANCE, CLEARLY MARKED HIM FOR EARLY REPLACEMENT.

3. CREATION OF NEW STATE SECRETARYSHIP FOR AGRICULTURE FOR DENIAU -- WHO HELD SAME POSITION BRIEFLY IN THIRD MESSMER GOVERNMENT FOR A MONTH BEFORE POMPIDOU DIED -- IS DESIGNED TO PUT DENIAU'S EXPERIENCE IN BRUSSELS TO WORK IN DEFENDING FRENCH POSITIONS IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. SEGARD'S ELEVATION TO MINISTER, ACCORDING TO ELYSEE PRESS SPOKESMAN, REFLECTS GISCARD'S JUDGMENT THAT THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR FRENCH FOREIGN CONFIDENTIAL

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TRADE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SPEAK OVERSEAS WITH THE AUTHORITY OF A MINISTER. SOUFFLET'S REPLACEMENT BY BOURGES -- A FORMER MINISTER OF COMMERCE (1972-1973) AND STATE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1967-1972) DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA -- TOGETHER WITH CREATION OF NEW STATE SECRETARYSHIP IN DEFENSE MINISTRY), APPEARS TO INDICATE THAT GOF INTENDS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE

FRENCH MILITARY'S INTERNAL PROBLEMS. (BOURGES HAS HAD PERSONABLE, FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH US IN PAST). CABINET CHANGES ARE NOT PARTICULARLY TIED TO DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONCERNS, NOR ARE THEY LIKELY TO BRING GISCARD MUCH ADDITIONAL VOTER SUPPORT. WE EXPECT NO ABRUPT CHANGES IN DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN POLICY, ALTHOUGH GOF COULD BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN POLICY AREAS OF TRADE AND AGRICULTURE.

4. ANOTHER EFFECT OF CABINET RESHUFFLE IS TO REASSERT CHIRAC'S AUTHORITY AND TO ENHANCE HIS IMAGE AS DECISIVE LEADER. BY RETAINING CHIRAC AND ALMOST HIS ENTIRE TEAM, GISCARD EXPRESSES PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN HIS PRIME MINISTER. BOURGES, A GAULLIST, SUPPORTS CHIRAC'S TAKEOVER OF THE UDR SECRETARY-GEHERALSHIP, AND CAN BE COUNTED ON TO BACK CHIRAC'S EFFORTS TO REJUVENATE THE GAULLIST MOVEMENT. AND BY DECIDING NOT TO RETURN

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

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AGR-05 SSC-01 /094 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6302

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG  
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AMEMBASSY ROME  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS  
USMISSION NATO  
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
AMCONSUL LYON  
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE  
AMCONSUL NICE  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 02724

SERVAN-SCHREIBER TO THE GOVERNMENT, (IF RUMORS THAT  
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GISCARD WANTED JJSS BACK IN THE CABINET ARE TRUE),  
GISCARD MAY HAVE BOWED TO THE COMBINED OPPOSITION OF  
CHIRAC AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR PONIATOWSKI.

5. SEPTTEL GIVES BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON NEW CABINET MEMBERS.

6. COMMENT. IN LIGHT OF PERSISTENT RUMORS THAT  
CABINET RESHUFFLE WOULD INVOLVE SEVERAL OTHER MINIS-  
TERS, PERHAPS WHAT DID NOT OCCUR IS AS IMPORTANT AS  
WHAT DID. FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES RETAINS HIS  
JOB DESPITE STRONG CRITICISM FROM THE PRESS AND  
INNUENDOS FROM CHIRAC'S OFFICE. EMBASSY WAS INFORMED  
THAT GISCARD PERSONALLY ASSURED SAUVAGNARGUES LAST  
WEEK THAT HE COULD STAY -- THUS SIGNALLING TO CHIRAC  
THAT THERE ARE LIMITS TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S POWER.  
ALSO, DESPITE MANY RUMORS, FORMER PRIME MINISTER  
MESSMER DID NOT RETURN TO THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. AND  
WHILE GISCARD APPEARS TO BE GIVING CHIRAC A FREE HAND  
IN PICKING THE CABINET MEMBERS CHIRAC WANTS, HE IS NOT  
LETTING HIS PRIME MINISTER ALTER THE CAREFUL BALANCE  
OF THE CABINET AMONG THE MAJOR PARTNERS OF THE  
GOVERNMENT COALITION.  
RUSH

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 JAN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 APR 2003  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
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**TAGS:** PINT, PGOV, FR, (BOURGES, YVON), (SEGARD, NORBERT), (SOUFFLET, JACQUES), (ACHILLE-FOULD, AYMAR)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006